(c) the specific problem to accord recognition to Hindi in United Nations Organization; and

(d) the number of languages in the world which enjoy recognition in the United Nations Organization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) to (d) The introduction of Hindi as one of the official languages of the United Nations has been raised in the World Hindi Conferences and other fora time and again. A high level Committee under the chairmanship of External Affairs Minister was constituted on 26th February, 2003 followed by a sub-Committee under the chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs in August, 2003 and a core-group headed by the Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs in September, 2003 to look into this matter and prepare a road map for realizing the objective. As a step in this direction it was decided to prepare an Advocacy Paper to present the Indian case with regard to introducing Hindi in the UN. The draft Advocacy Paper has been prepared. However, this has implications, both financial and procedural as well as legal. The procedure for getting any language recognized as one of the Official Languages of the UN involves obtaining approval of the General Assembly to amend Rule-51 of the Rules of Procedure. Such a proposal has to be approved by more than half of the members of the General Assembly where every member-State has a vote. At present the proposal would require approval of 96 member-States given the current membership of 191. In addition, recognizing any language as the official language of the UN entails substantial increase in the expenditure of the UN wherefore every member country has to enhance its contribution, which is why most of the members remain passive to support such a proposal.

At present UN has six Official Languages, which are English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic.

Indian and Pakistani prisoners in the two countries

1794. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian and Pakistani prisoners, POWs and civilians, held captive in respective jails at present;

(b) the number of prisoners released by both the countries during the last two years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken to release other prisoners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) According to information available, there are 386 Indian fishermen and 162 civilian prisoners in Pakistani jails. However Pakistan has acknowledged the presence of only 377 fishermen and 156 civilian prisoners. According to our estimates, there are 74 Indian Prisoners of War (POWs) in Pakistan. However, Pakistan Government does not acknowledge the presence of any POWs in its jails.

There are 59 Pakistani fishermen in Indian jails. The information pertaining to the number of Pakistani civilian prisoners is being obtained from the authorities concerned. There are no Pakistani POWs in Indian jails.

(b) *Indian prisoners released by Pakistan*

2004			
	Fishermen	:	nil
	Civilian prisoners	:	37
2005			
	Fishermen	:	1171
	Civilian prisoners	:	125

Pakistani prisoners released by India

2004			
	Fishermen	:	nil
	Civilian prisoners	:	58
2005			
	Fishermen	:	222
	Civilian prisoners	:	159

(c) Government is persistently pursuing the matter with Pakistan through diplomatic channels and during high level talks from time to time for the release of all the remaining Indian prisoners.